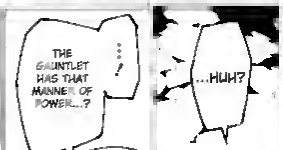
第3話 Al-mi'raj

DEFENDING THE DEMON?
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT OLD MAN?
YOU WILL REFER TO ME AS YOUR COMMANDER, ASUMA.
I USED THE DEMON SUMMONING PROGRAM FUNCTIONALITY OF THE GAUNTLET
I SUMMONED HIM. HE IS MY SERVANT, IN A SENSE
THIS DEMON IS NO ENEMY.
!?
?

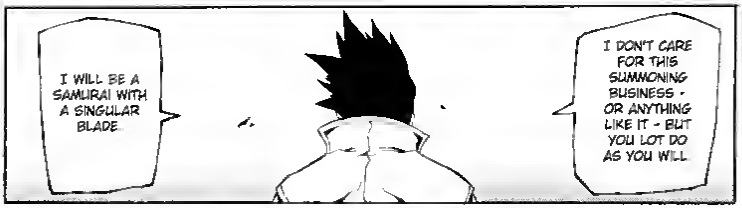
BEAR THIS IN MIND:
WE SAMURAI MAKE USE OF THIS ABILITY...
TO FIGHT TOGETHER WITH DEMONS, SIDE BY SIDE...!

THIS SAMURAI TRADE IS REALLY QUITE THE BRACING OCCUPATION, NO?
A DEMON FOR A DEMON SO TO SPEAK.
AN EYE FOR AN EYE

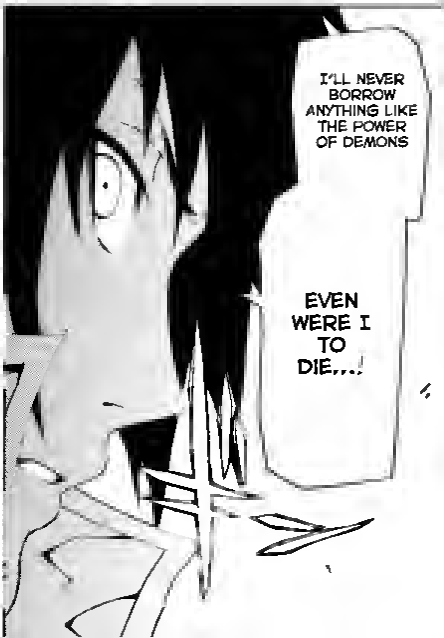

THE GAUNTLET HAS THAT MANNER OF POWER...?
...HUH?

WELL, NOW...
I CAME QUITE CLOSE TO LOSING MY WAY FOR CERTAIN.
WALTER!

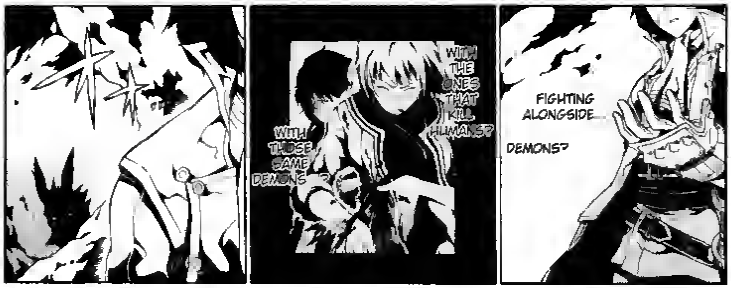
AGUMA?
I'M GOING BACK NOW.
...A WASTE.
WITH IT, WE CAN COLLECT EVERY SINGLE DEMON, AS IF IN A GAME OF OTEDAMA—
THE DEMON SUMMONING PROGRAM!
AMUSING, DON'T YOU THINK?


I WILL BE A SAMURAI WITH A SINGULAR BLADE.
I DON'T CARE FOR THIS SUMMONING BUSINESS - OR ANYTHING LIKE IT - BUT YOU LOT DO AS YOU WILL

...!?


I'LL NEVER BORROW ANYTHING LIKE THE POWER OF DEMONS
EVEN WERE I TO DIE...!

AND YOU WILL NOT DEFEND THE PEOPLE THAT WAY.
PRIDE IS DEADLY TO SAMURAI.
DAMNED PRENTICE.
.....

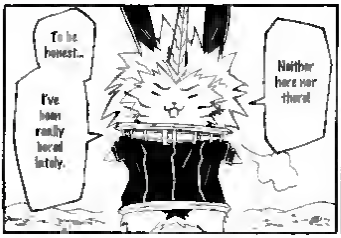

WITH THE ONES THAT KILL HUMANS?
WITH THOSE SAME DEMONS
FIGHTING ALONGSIDE DEMONS?

The next day—
.....

TODAY YOU WILL ALL BE ON YOUR OWN.
THIS WILL SERVE AS PUNISHMENT FOR YOU ALL
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE BEEN OUT SUCH A WAYS.
YOUR ORDERS ARE TO PATROL DISTANT VILLAGES.
. .PHEW.
I'VE WALKED QUITE A BIT.
. . I MUST HURRY—
WALKING AT A STEADY PACE WILL GET YOU THERE IN HALF A DAY
JONATHAN, YOU ARE ASSIGNED TO
SHIM O'KEY TEZAWER VILLAGE
I don't got the slightest intention of starting anything against you!
I mean, yeah, I may be a demon, but,
C'mon, what's the stance for!?
?
!!
A DEMON !?
If I'm not mistaken... You said you were Jonathan, yeah?
Hey, buddy!

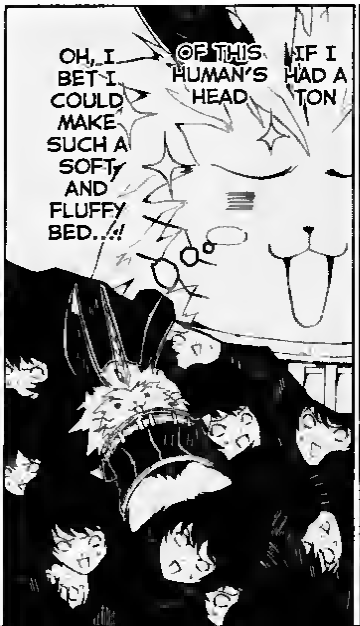
Nice to meet ya!
My name's Al-mi'raj!
But you can call me Al if you want!
Avatar Al-mi'raj
WELL, NOW THAT IS SOMETHIN...
I'... BET YOU'D TRY AND KILL ANY DEMON THAT CAME BY, SOON AS YOU SAW 'EM.
...?
HE'S...
...?
SUCH MORONS.
HUMANS ARE...
QUITE THE FOUL-MOUTHED ONE...
ACTUALLY, THEY'RE BEYOND MORONS—
I'D SPLIT THEIR HEADS OPEN AND CHURN THE BRAINS...!
I WILL CUT YOU DOWN...!
PARDON, BUT I'M IN A HURRY
IF YOU DO NOT STEP AWAY,

I even came out here *just* to meet with you—
!
I thought we could become allies.
And to think I went through all that trouble...
I'm shakin'!
Now I've kinda lost interest...


To be honest...
I've been really bored lately.
Neither here nor there!

...WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
I guess I should say I'd be your frie-nvvv!
Well, I shouldn't say we'd be friends...

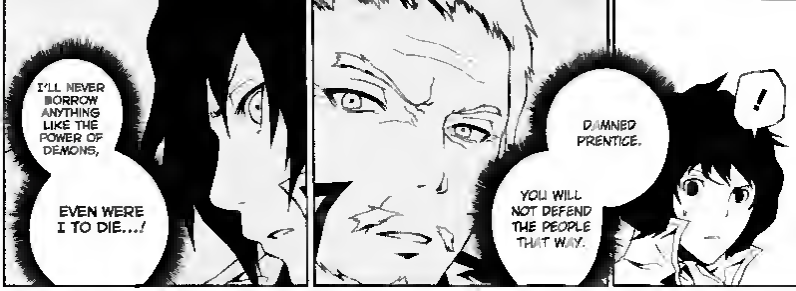
So, I want you to split yourself into about 100 you!
WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH THIS DEMON...?


OH, I BET I COULD MAKE SUCH A SOFT AND FLUFFY BED...!!
OF THIS HUMAN'S HEAD
IF I HAD A TON

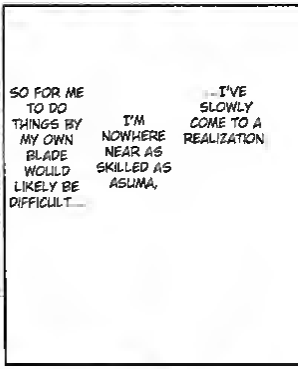
AND IT WAS...!

When I saw you, I thought:
That looks pretty interesting!

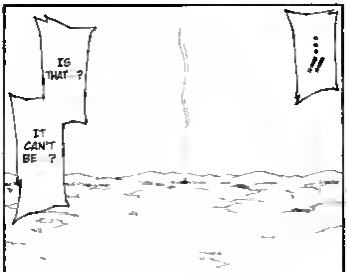
...IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN KINDLY CHOOSE ANOTHER.
わー
Do not follow me!
You're irritating me!
And that's why I'm your demon ally now!
You're gonna help me kill some time!
BE ALLIES WITH A DEMON...!
I WILL NOT
...
YOU SAMURAI
GOTTA USE OUR DEMONIC POWER
OTHERWISE YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING, CAN YA...?
What an idiotic thing to say, especially for a lowly, afro-haired Samurai.
You'd do well to stop addressing me as such!
Hunh?


I'LL NEVER BORROW ANYTHING LIKE THE POWER OF DEMONS,
EVEN WERE I TO DIE...!
DAMNED PRENTICE.
YOU WILL NOT DEFEND THE PEOPLE THAT WAY.
!

HOW-EVER...
.....!

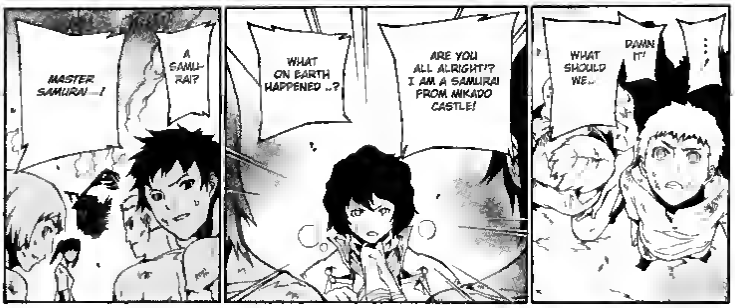

SO FOR ME TO DO THINGS BY MY OWN BLADE WOULD LIKELY BE DIFFICULT...
I'M NOWHERE NEAR AS SKILLED AS ASUMA,
...I'VE SLOWLY COME TO A REALIZATION

HURRY...


IS THAT ?
IT CAN'T BE ?
...

THAT IMAGE THAT SUDDENLY CAME TO MIND
WHAT WAS THAT JUST NOW?
?
What's the matter?

Shim O'Key Tezawer Village


A SAMU-RAI?
MASTER SAMURAI ...!
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED ..?
ARE YOU ALL ALRIGHT!? I AM A SAMURAI FROM MIKADO CASTLE!
DAMN IT!
WHAT SHOULD WE..

!!
MASTER SAMURAI!
MY DAUGHTER AND MY GRANDCHILD,
THEY'VE BEEN CAPTURED BY A MONSTER—
PLEASE SAVE THEM, MASTER SAMURAI, I BEG YOU!!

I CANNOT WAIT FOR ANY ASSISTANCE.
IF I DO NOT MAKE HASTE, NOW, THE VILLAGERS WILL BE—
Maybe you should call your Samurai buddies or somethin'.
...Jonathan, are you really gonna be fine all on your lonesome?
WAS MEANT TO CONVEY THIS TO ME—?
THAT VISION FROM EARLIER, PERHAPS IT...

BORROWING THIS CREATURE'S POWER WOULD BE THE WISEST COURSE...!
...I'M PRESSED FOR TIME RIGHT NOW.
Hmmm... Well, I am bored.
Call me when you're havin' trouble,
and I'll lend you my power!
!

I may look all cuddly, but—
Oh, I better tell you something now:
BUT...
...CURSES!

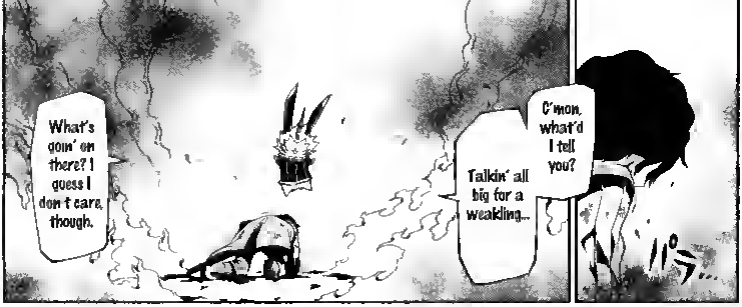
MY POWER...
IS NOTHING TO SNEEZE AT!
...OH, ARE THERE STILL SURVIVORS?
!!
IS THAT THE SOURCE OF THE BLAZE...!?
I'M RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF HAVING A REALLY GOOD TIME.
CAN YOU PLEASE NOT BOTHER ME?
HAHAHA!

GOOD?
I'VE GOT CHILLS!
THIS MOTHER AND HER CHILD WERE HAPPY ONLY YESTERDAY,
AND NOW, BEFORE ME,
THEY SHUDDER IN FEAR!
HAHAHAHAHAHA!

IF YOU CAN... THE BOY'S LIFE...
MOTHER... MOTHER!
YOU CUR...!

HEY, YOU
DO YOU HEAR WHAT I SAID?
GO!
LET THEM
NOT TO BOTHER ME!?
DIDN'T I TELL YOU
WH...
SHE'S...
STRONG...!
!!
MASTER SAMURAI—
HAAW,
I'M SO BORED

...I WON'T ALLOW YOU.
WA... WA AA AA AA AGH!
OH WELL. I'LL JUST KILL YOOOU ♪
!!!
MASTER SAMURAI!!
YOU'RE THE TYPE I HATE THE MOST!
WOW, YOU'RE ANNOYING! I THINK YOU'RE A WEIRD!
HUH ?


What's goin' on there? I guess I don't care, though.
Talkin' all big for a weakling...
C'mon, what'd I tell you?
パラ...

.....!
DON'T IT SOUND LIKE IT COULD BE FUN...?
WHY DON'T YOU STOP BEIN' SO STUBBORN,
AND TRY ASKING FOR MY POWER?

I WILL BE THE ONE
TO PROTECT YOU...!
DON'T BE CHILD-ISH...!
NO!
I'M STAYING HERE WITH YOU, MOTHE-
FOOLISH BOY!
-QUICKLY NOW
YOU MAY ESCAPE, AT LEAST...!

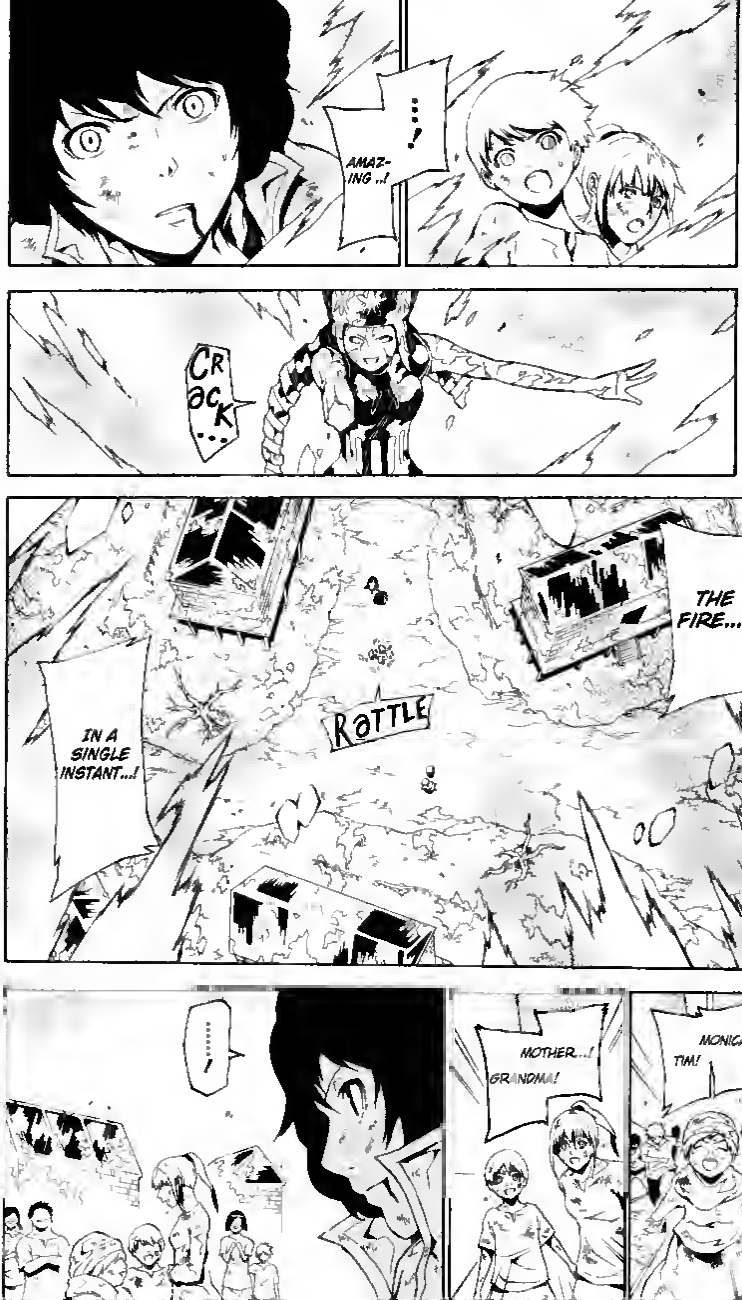
DEMON!
HAHA!
AWW, I'M MAKING YOU CRY~
Aren't you paralyzed from your wounds?
Now you've gone straight past into an idiot.
...
You're still gettin' up, even with your body like that?
...I AM STILL
YOU OPPO-NENT...!

!
I WAS UNABLE TO DEFEND THE PEOPLE...!
THEY'RE NOT THE WOUNDS OF WHEN
...I DO HURT, YES.
BUT...

WHAT A TOTAL RETARD!
HAHA HAHA!
THAT'S RIGHT~~~
HEHEH.
THAT'S A STUPID QUESTION, JONATHAN.
YOU... CAN YOU DEFEAT THAT DEMON?
YOU TOLD ME.. TO CALL YOU AL, YES?
WHAT WAS I HESITATING OVER?
I APOLOGIZE FOR HAVING TO MAKE AN ALLY OF A DEMON.
BUT ABOVE ALL, I—

I BECAME A SAMURAI
TO DEFEND PEOPLE...!
CRUSH THAT DEMON, AL!

BU-
FU-
DY-
NE!


AMAZ-
ING..!
CR
ACK
...
THE
FIRE...!
IN A
SINGLE
INSTANT...!
RATTLE
MOTHER...!
GRANDMA!
MONICA!
TIM!

Well?
Cool, huh?
!
So honest- you freaked, didn't ya!?
If this doesn't convince you I should be your demon buddy
then you need to be kicked outta the Samurai!
...HOW MANY TIMES MUST YOU MAKE ME SAY THIS?
I CANNOT BE AN ALLY TO A DEMON
THAT BEING SO.
I WILL BE USING YOU AS A SERVANT
AND THAT IS ALL YOU WILL EVER BE. MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT THAT
AL!
...Wh-
What the hell's up with you!? Yeah, be more frank about it, would ya!?
...Oh, whatever
I'm Avatar Al-mi'raj! Let's get along.

Somethin' fell outta that demon's carcass!
What's this?
THIS IS—
.....?
MAI HIME
舞姫
MORI-OUGAI
森鴎外